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WHOLESALE INFLATION MODERATES TO 1.22% IN DEC

The wholesale price-based inflation moderated during the month on the back of easing prices of onion and potato

WPI INFLATION AT 1.55 PC IN NOVEMBER 2020

According to government data, the WPI inflation was 1.55 per cent in November 2020, and 2.76 per cent in December 2019. "The rate of inflation based on WPI Food Index decreased from 4.27 per cent in November 2020, to 0.92 per cent in December 2020," data from the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade showed.

INFLATION IN CEREALS, GRAINS ALSO EASES

- Onion prices contracted by 54.69% in December, while Potato prices eased to 37.75% during the month
- Inflation in cereals, paddy, wheat and pulses, also eased in December over the previous month. Wholesale prices of fruits were, however, higher during the said period | P12

4.59%

RATE OF RETAIL INFLATION IN DECEMBER

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi signs the article of impeachment (see pic below) against US President Donald Trump at the US Capitol, in Washington DC | AFP

Trump is first US President to be impeached twice

He now faces a trial in Senate; if convicted, he could be barred from holding office

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

JUST eight days before he is slated to leave office, Donald Trump earned the dubious distinction of becoming the first American president to be impeached twice, with 10 of his fellow Republicans joining the Democrats in the House of Representatives to charge him with "incitement of insurrection" for his role in provoking his supporters to storm the US Capitol on January 6.

Trump will now face a trial in the Senate where, if convicted, he could be barred from holding office ever again. The Democrats will need 17 Republican votes in the 100-member Senate as a two-thirds majority is required in the Upper House of the US Congress to convict and impeach the president.

However, Trump will not have to quit the White House before his term ends as the Senate is adjourned till January 19, a day before Joe Biden takes oath as the 46th President of the United States.

The Democratic-controlled House on Wednesday impeached Trump by 232 to 197 votes after an impassioned debate. The House went ahead with the move after Vice President Mike Pence on Tuesday refused to invoke the 25th Amendment to remove Trump from office. Those who voted in favour of the impeachment included the House's No. 3 Republican, Liz Cheney, as well as all four Indian-American Democratic members — Ami Bera, Ro Khanna, Raja Krishnamoorthi and Pramila Jayapal. P11

YOUTUBE SUSPENDS DON'S CHANNEL

YouTube has temporarily suspended the account of outgoing President Trump, preventing all video uploads by the channel for the next seven days, amid concerns over "ongoing potential for violence". This follows Facebook and Twitter's suspension of his accounts.

PM to unveil vaccine drive at 10.30 am tomorrow

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi will launch the much-awaited Covid-19 vaccination programme at 3,006 designated centres across the country at 10.30 am on Saturday.

"This will be the world's largest vaccination programme covering the entire length and breadth of the country and all preparations are in place to initiate the programme on the principles of Jan Bhagidari," the Prime Minister's Office said in a statement. "A total of 3,006 session sites across all states and UTs will be virtually connected during the launch and around 100 beneficiaries will be vaccinated at each session site on the first day," it added.

The Centre also released a rulebook for the vaccine rollout to all the states and UTs, listing the do's and don'ts which say minors (under-18), pregnant women and lactating mothers should not be given the shots.

Health workers in both government and private sectors, including anganwadi workers, will receive the vaccine during the first phase. As per the details shared, at every centre, 100 healthcare workers have been registered for inoculation on the first day at each centre. However, the government fears that the actual count of people who take the jab may be far lower, owing to "vaccine hesitation".

"Over 3 lakh people are being sent messages to receive their vaccines on Day 1 at the designated centres. But it won't be surprising if lesser than expected number of beneficiaries turn up," said a senior official. P9

Victoria Hospital to open non-Covid services

Bengaluru's Victoria Hospital, will start non-Covid services from Monday, over 10 months after they were closed in March 2020 amidst the pandemic. Dr C R Jayanti, Dean of Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute (BMCRI), to which Victoria Hospital is affiliated, said, "We will restart services from Monday." P3

Group D, sanitation staff will get first shot in state

RANJANI MADHAVAN @Bengaluru

THE first person to get the jab in Karnataka on the inaugural day of the vaccination programme on January 16 will be a sanitation worker/Group-D employee. This is to recognise the efforts of people on the ground who helped in the fight against Covid-19, according to Health Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Pandey.

This was mentioned in an internal document related to a meeting held by the Health Department with district deputy commissioners on January 13. The health care workers will include persons above 20 years age, preferably without co-morbidity, on the inaugural day.

"Health workers, including all cadres in the facility, should be vaccinated on the inaugural day. A maximum of 100 beneficiaries per facility on the day of inauguration is planned. The health facility should prepare a list of selected beneficiaries with name and designation and share with district RCH officers," the document reads.

There are nine categories of health care workers including frontline and ICDS workers, nurses and supervisors, medical officers, paramedical staff, support staff, students, scientists and research staff, clerical and administrative staff and other health staff.

CONTINUED ON: P3

Farmer leader recuses from SC committee

HARPREET BAJWA @Chandigarh

FARMER union leader Bhupinder Singh Mann on Thursday recused himself from the four-member committee set up by the Supreme Court to resolve the stalemate over the agri laws in the wake of the allegations that the panel was "pro-government".

Mann said he was "thankful to the SC for nominating me in the four-member committee". However, he added, "As a farmer myself and a union leader, in view of the prevailing sentiments and apprehensions amongst the farm unions and the public in general, I am ready to sacrifice any position offered or given to me so as to not compromise the interests of Punjab and farmers of the country. I am recusing myself from the committee and I will always stand with my farmers and Punjab." P9

TAKE YOUR COMPLAINTS TO DELHI, CM TELLS DISSENTERS

G SUBHASH CHANDRA
@ Davanagere

A day after expanding his cabinet, Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa, who was brimming with confidence on Thursday, hit back at the disgruntled legislators. He advised them to take up their issues with the central leadership and not embarrass the party and the state government by making public statements.

Addressing the media at the GMIT helipad in the city, he stressed that he had the full backing of the party top leadership. Dissenting legislators can take their complaint to the Delhi leaders, who will decide on it, he remarked in a warning tone. He also said that he has no objecting to MLAs lodging complaints against him with the top brass.

"I have no fear of any CD. The cabinet was expanded as per the directions of the BJP national leadership. All the options were weighed before the expansion was taken up and the best interests of the party have been safeguarded. As per the directions of high command, one berth is still kept vacant," the CM noted.

Many BJP legislators had expressed displeasure after seven new ministers — Umesh Katti, C P Yogeshwara, Murugesh Nirani, S Angara, M T B Nagaraj, R Shankar and Aravind Limbavali — were inducted into the cabinet on Wednesday. Some legislators had even questioned the induction of MLCs and the regional disparity in representation of districts.

CONTINUED ON: P5

Vachananda Swamy of Panchamasali Gurupeetha offering 'ellu-bella' to Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa in Harihar on Thursday | EXPRESS

Yogeshwar had to raise ₹9 cr loan: Jarkiholi

Water Resources Minister Ramesh Jarkiholi on Thursday stirred a hornet's nest when he said that Minister C P Yogeshwar had worked hard to unite rebel legislators prior to the formation of the BJP government and, in the process, raised Rs 9 crore loan by mortgaging his house besides borrowing money from Minister M T B Nagaraj. P4

EXPRESS READ

Google removes loan apps from Play Store

New Delhi: Google on Thursday said it has reviewed personal loan apps in India, and removed those violating its user safety policies from its Play Store. P12

Tesla CEO Elon Musk confirms India entry

New Delhi: Tesla CEO Elon Musk has confirmed the company's plans to enter the Indian market, within days of registering its arm here.

Gujarat cadre IAS officer joins BJP

Lucknow: Gujarat cadre IAS officer A K Sharma, who recently took voluntary retirement from the service, joined the BJP on Thursday.

WITH THIS ISSUE

CITY'S SMART WEEKEND GUIDE
INDULGE
30 PAGES, INCLUDING 16 OF INDULGE (TABLOID)

TEMPLE CHARIOT

MLA makes vow for BSY as CM, gets govt to pay for it

MANJU SHETTAR @ Bengaluru

HOW about the government fulfilling your vow to a deity? For commoners, it's next to impossible, but not for Mudigere MLA **M P Kumaraswamy**. The government has even gone ahead and granted a whopping ₹25 lakh to fulfil his vow as a 'special case'.

In his letter to the CM, Kumaraswamy stated that he had taken a vow in 2019 that he would donate a wooden chariot to the Kalanatheshwara Temple in Palguni village and take up rejuvenation of the Bhairaveshwara temple in Betagere if Yediyurappa becomes the CM.

And where will the money come from? The MLA conveniently requested Yediyurappa to sanction ₹35 lakh to fulfil his vows — ₹30 lakh for the Kalanatheshwara temple and ₹5 lakh for the Bhairaveshwara temple, both in his constituency.

The Chief Minister has considered the request and instructed the Additional Chief Secretary, Revenue Department, to treat it as a 'special case' and sanction ₹25 lakh to Kalanatheshwara temple.

Speaking to *The New Indian Express*, the beaming MLA said, "I had taken a personal vow before Yediyurappa became the CM. Thus, I had requested him (CM) to sanction grants to fulfil the vows. I even thanked him on Thursday for sanctioning ₹25 lakh and posted it on social media to bring it to the notice of the people of my constituency as it was good news for Sankranthi".

CONTINUED ON: P5

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